

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SSM-05
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O P 231404Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0770
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 1010

JERUSALEM FOR USDEL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: IS, EG, XF
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO GOI DECISION TO POSTPONE MILITARY TALKS

1. SUMMARY : YESTERDAY'S CABINET DECISION TO POST-
PONE DESPATCH OF THE ISRAELI DELEGATION TO THE MILI-
TARY COMMITTEE WAS RECEIVED WITH ONLY TEPID APPROVAL BY
THE PRESS TODAY. WHILE MOST COMMENTATORS AGREED WITH
THE NEED FOR "A COOLING-OFF" PERIOD, SOME THOUGHT THE
STATEMENT READ BY PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AT THE CONCLUSION
OF THE REGULAR SUNDAY CABINET MEETING NEEDLESSLY ABRA-
SIVE. END SUMMARY

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2. IN ITS EDITORIAL THE JERUSALEM POST, FOR EXAMPLE,
CALLS THE CABINET DECISION A PREDICTABLE TIT FOR
EGYPTIAN TAT. HOWEVER, THE POST RECOMMENDS A PINCH OF
SALT BEFORE ACCEPTING THE GOVERNMENT'S EXPLANATION FOR
THE POSTPONEMENT. THE EGYPTIAN PRESS CAMPAIGN "DID NOT
QUITE MERIT" THE HARSH DESCRIPTION ACCORDED IT BY THE

CABINET; THE CAMPAIGN WAS ALMOST NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT EGYPT'S PAPERS USED TO SAY ABOUT ISRAEL AND ABOUT JEWS BEFORE SADAT'S TRIP TO JERUSALEM. THE POST ALSO TAKES ISSUE WITH THE CABINET'S HEAVY CRITICISM OF SADAT'S SATURDAY NIGHT SPEECH. TO THE POST THE SPEECH WAS A DISTINCT (AND APPARENTLY WELCOME) ANTI-CLIMAX, AND WHILE ITS DEMANDS ARE "TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE," THEY ARE NOT NEW. THE POST NOTES THE ABSENCE AMONG THOSE DEMANDS OF WHAT BEGIN HAD SINGLED OUT AS THE MOST PROVOCATIVE OF ALL: THE CESSION OF EAST JERUSALEM. THE EDITORIAL ENDS BY URGING EFFORTS TOWARD A NEW ATMOSPHERE CONDUCTIVE TO CALM NEGOTIATIONS.

3. DAVAR'S EDITORIAL ALSO CALLS FOR "A NEW STYLE" IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AFTER RAPPING BOTH THE ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR PUBLIC RHETORIC. "THESE ARE NEGOTIATIONS THAT MUST BE CONDUCTED -- NOT A PLAY THAT IS BEING STAGED." DAVAR NOTES THAT JUST AS SADAT DID NOT CLOSE THE DOOR TO FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS, THE GOI'S DECISION DID NOT BLOCK A RESUMPTION OF THE MILITARY TALKS, ONLY SUSPENDED THEM. GIVEN THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE, DAVAR SUPPORTS THE CABINET DECISION. MAARIV ALSO THINKS A "TIME-OUT" IS IN ORDER, INDICATING APPROVAL FOR THE CABINET'S DECISION, IT MAINTAINS THERE IS NOT POINT IN CONTINUING MILITARY DISCUSSIONS WHEN THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE, "WHICH FORMS THE BASIS OF THOSE TALKS, IS SO CLOSE TO COLLAPSING." ONE OF DAVAR'S LEADING COMMENTARIES.

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TATOR'S, DANIEL BLOCH, SEES NO CAUSE FOR PESSIMISM SINCE THE EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI STATEMENTS OVER THE WEEKEND DO NOT SPELL A COLLAPSE OF NEGOTIATIONS. HE BELIEVES THE U.S. ROLE NOW IS, ON THE ONE HAND, TO INDUCE EGYPT THAT ITS "NOT AN INCH" APPROACH CANNOT LEAD TO A SETTLEMENT, AND ON THE OTHER, TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE GOI THAT EXPANDING SETTLEMENTS AT RAFAH AND REFUSING TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS ON THE WEST BANK PREVENT ANY BREAKTHROUGH TO PEACE.

4. HAARETZ'S EDITORIAL, HOWEVER, CLAIMS THAT ONLY EGYPT STANDS IN THE WAY OF PROGRESS IN THE SUSPENDED NEGOTIATIONS. BELIEVING THAT THE CABINET HAD NO ALTERNATIVE TO A POSTPONEMENT IN THE MILITARY TALKS, THE PAPER ASKS THE U.S. TO MAKE SADAT UNDERSTAND THAT THE ONLY RECIPE PROMISING SUCCESS IN THE DIPLOMATIC EFFORT IS READINESS TO MEET HALF-WAY. "THE TASK OF U.S. DIPLOMACY IS...TO CONVINC EGYPT'S LEADERSHIP THAT IT MUST CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL...IN A SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE."

LEWIS

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 23 jan 1978
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Disposition Comment:
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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